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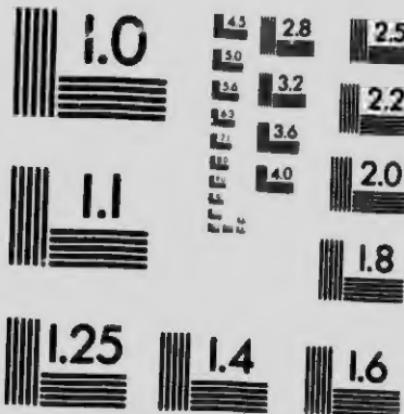
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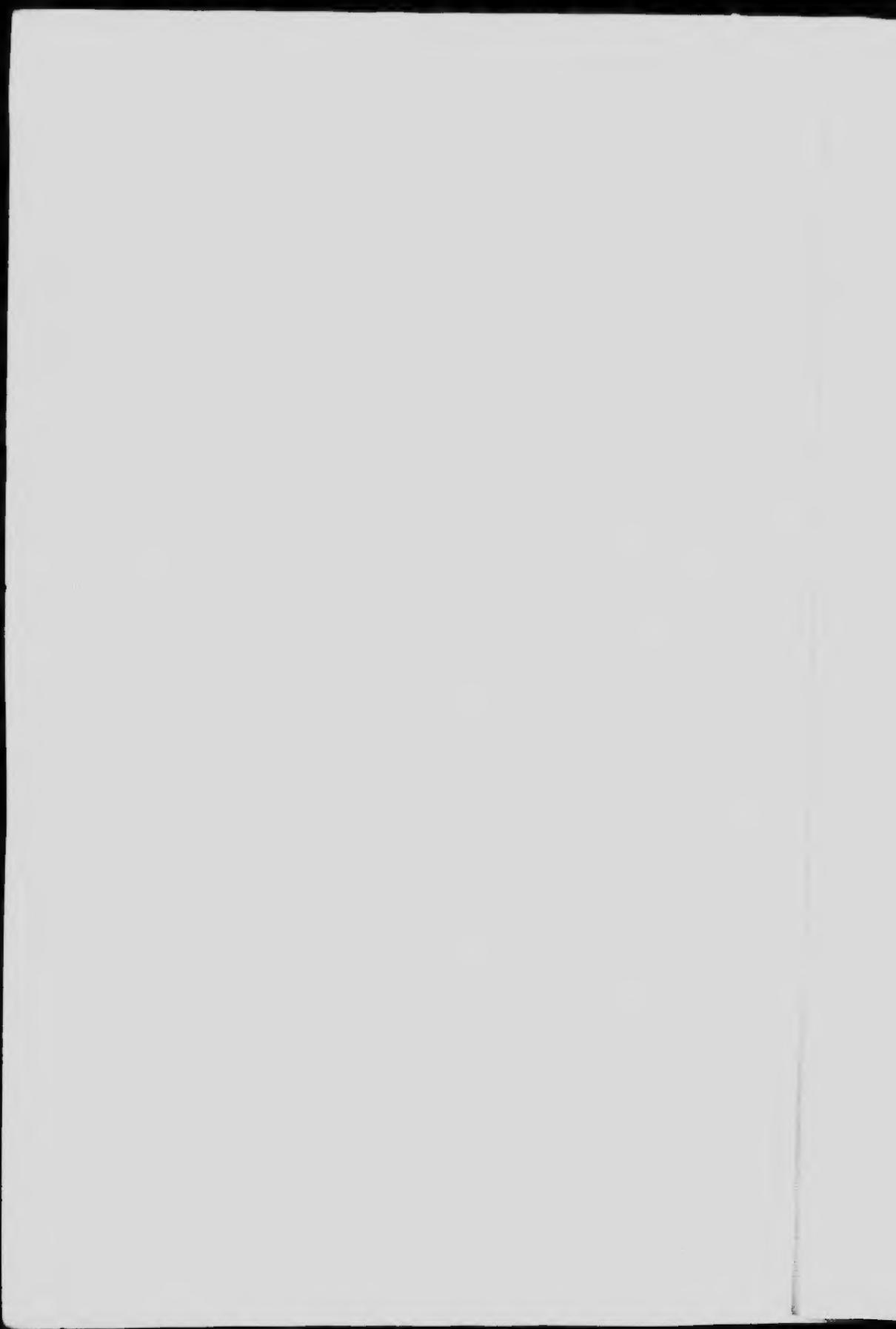
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"HOWDY HONEY HOWDY"



PAGE LAURENCE DUNBAR





HOWDY, HONEY
HOWDY



HOWDY HONEY HOWDY

BY

PAUL LAURENCE DUNBAR

Illustrated with photographs

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CONTENTS

	PAGE
HOWDY, HONEY, HOWDY	7
ENCOURAGEMENT	13
DE WAY TINGS COME	19
THE DELINQUENT	23
ACCOUNTABILITY	29
PROTEST	33
POSSUM	39
FOOLIN' WID DE SEASONS	43
ANGELINA	49
A DEATH SONG	57
A CHRISTMAS FOLKSONG	61
FAITH	69
HOPE	73
A LOVE LETTER	77
PUTTIN' THE BABY AWAY	83
ADVICE	89
DREAMIN' TOWN	95
SCAMP	101
OPPORTUNITY	105
A SUMMER NIGHT	111
THE OLD CABIN	117



HOWDY, HONEY
HOWDY

DO' a-stan'in' on a jar, fiah a-shinin'
thoo,
Ol' folks drowsin' 'roun' de place,
wide awake is Lou,
W'en I tap, she answah, an' I see
huh 'mence to grin,
"Howdy, honey, howdy, won't you
step right in?"

Den I step erpon de log layin' at
de do',
Bless de Lawd, huh mammy an' huh
pap's done 'menced to sno',
Now's de time, ef evah, ef I's gwine
to try an' win,
"Howdy, honey, howdy, won't you
step right in?"





No use playin' on de aidge, trimblin'
on de brink,

W'en a body love a gal, tell huh
whut he t'ink ;

W'en huh he'a't is open fu' de love
you gwine to gin,

Pull yo'se'f togethah, suh, an' step
right in.

Sweetes' imbitation dat a body evah
hyeahed,

Sweetah den de music of a love-sick
mockin'-bird,

Comin' f'om de gal you loves bettah
den yo' kin,

" Howdy, honey, howdy, won't you
step right in ? "

At de gate o' heaven w'en de sto'm
o' life is pas',

'Spec' I'll be a-stan'in', 'twell de
Mastah say at las',

" Hyeah he stan' all weary, but he
winned his fight wid sin.

Howdy, honey, howdy, won't you
step right in ? "



ENCOURAGEMENT

WHO dat knockin' at de do' ?
Why, Ike Johnson, — yes, fu' sho !
Come in, Ike. I's mighty glad
You come down. I t'ought you's
mad

At me 'bout de othah night,
An' was stayin' 'way fu' spite.
Say, now, was you mad fu' true
W'en I kin' o' laughed at you ?
Speak up, Ike, an' 'spress yo'se'f.

"Tain't no use a-lookin' sad,
An' a-mekin' out you's mad ;
Ef you's gwine to be so glum,
Wondah why you evah come.
I don't lak nobody 'roun'
Dat jes' shet dey mouf an' frown, —
Oh, now, man, don't act a dunce !
Cain't you talk ? I tol' you ence,
Speak up, 'ke, an' 'spress yo'se'f.



Wha'd you come hyeah fu' to-night ?
Body'd t'ink yo' haid ain't right.
I's done all dat I kin do, —
Dressed perticler, jes' fu' you ;
Reckon I'd 'a' bettah wo'
My ol' rugged calico.
Aftah all de pains I's took,
Cain't you tell me how I look ?
 Speak up, Ike, an' 'spress yo'se'f.

Bless my soul ! I 'mos' fu'got
Tellin' you 'bout Tildy Scott.
Don't you know, come Thu'sday
 night,
She gwine ma'y Lucius White ?
Miss Lize say I allus wuh
Heap sight laklier 'n huh ;
An' she'll git me somep'n new,
Ef I wants to ma'y too.
 Speak up, Ike, an' 'spress yo'se'f.

I could ma'y in a week,
Ef de man I wants 'ud speak.
'Tildy's presents'll be fine,
But dey wouldn't ekal mine.
Him whut gits me fu' a wife
'Ll be proud, you bet yo' life.
I's had offers : some ain't quit ;
But I has n't ma'ied yit !

Speak up, Ike, an' 'spress yo'se'f.

Ike, I loves you, — yes, I does ;
You's my choice, and allus was.
Laffin' at you ain't no harm.
Go 'way, dahky, whaih's yo' arm ?
Hug me closer — dah, dat's right !
Wasn't you a awful sight,
Havin' me to baig you so ?
Now ax whut you want to know, —
Speak up, Ike, an' 'spress yo'se'f !





**DE WAY T'INGS
COME**

DE way t'ings come, hit seems
to me,

Is des' one monst'ous mystery :
De way hit seem to strike a man,
Dey ain't no sense, dey ain't no plan ;
Ef trouble sta'ts a pilin' down,
It ain't no use to rage er frown,
It ain't no use to strive er pray,
Hit 's mortal boun' to come dat way.

Now, ef you 's hongry, an' yo' plate
Des' keep on sayin' to you, " Wait,"
Don't mek no diffunce how you feel,
'T won't do no good to hunt a meal,
Fu' dat ah meal des' boun' to hide
Ontwell de devil 's satisfied,
An' 'twell dey 's some p'n by to cyahve
You 's got to ease yo'se'f an' stahve.



But ef dey's co'n meal on de she'f
You need n't bothah 'roun' yo'se'f,
Somebody's boun' to amble in
An' 'vite you to dey co'n meal bin ;
An' ef you's stuffed up to de froat
Wid co'n er middlin', fowl er shoat,
Des' look out an' you'll see fu' sho
A 'possum faint befo' yo' do'.

De way t'ings happen, huhuh, chile,
Dis worl' 's done puzzled me one
w'ile ;

I 's mighty skeered I 'll fall in doubt,
I des' won't try to reason out
De reason why folks strive an' plan
A dinnah fu' a full-fed man,
An' shet de do' an' cross de street
F'om one dat raaly needs to eat.



THE DELINQUENT



GOO'-BY, Jinks, I got to hump,
Got to mek dis pony jump ;
See dat sun a-goin' down
'N' me a-foolin' hyeah in town !
 Git up, Suke — go long !

Guess Mirandy 'll think I 's tight,
Me not home an' comin' on night.
What 's dat stan'in' by de fence ?
Pshaw ! why don't I lu'n some sense ?
 Git up, Suke — go long !

Guess I spent down dah at Jinks'
Mos' a dollah fu' de drinks.
Bless yo' soul, you see dat star ?
Lawd, but won't Mirandy rar ?
 Git up, Suke — go long !



Went dis mo'nin', hyeah it's night,
Dah's de cabin dah in sight.
Who's dat stan'in' in de do'?
Dat must be Mirandy, sho',
Git up, Suke — go long!

Got de close-stick in huh han',
Dat look funny, goodness lan',
Sakes alibe, but she look glum !
Hyeah, Mirandy, hyeah I come !

Git up, Suke — go long !

Ef 't had n't 'a' be'n fur you, you
slow ole fool, I'd a' be'n home long
fo' now !





ACCOUNTABILITY

FOLKS ain't got no right to cen-
suah othah folks about dey
habits ;

Him dat giv' de squir'l's de bushtails
made de bobtails fu' de rabbits.
Him dat built de gread big moun-
tains hollered out de little
valleys,

Him dat made de streets an' drive-
ways wasn't shamed to make
de alleys.

We is all constructed diff'ent, d'ain't
no two of us de same ;

We cain't he'p ouah likes an' dislikes,
ef we 'se bad we ain't to blame.
Ef we 'se good, we need n't show off,
case you bet it ain't ouah doin'
We gits into su'ttain channels dat we
jes' cain't he'p pu'suin'.

But we all fits into places dat no
othah ones could fill,
An' we does the things we has to,
big er little, good er ill.
John cain't tek de place o' Henry,
Su an' Sally ain't alike;
Bass ain't nuthin' like a suckah, chub
ain't nuthin' like a pike.



W'en you come to t'ink about it,
how it's all planned out it's
splendid.

Nothin's done er evah happens, 'dout
hit's somefin' dat's intended;
Don't keer whut you does, you has to,
an' hit sholy beats de dickens,—
Viney, go put on de kittle, I got one
o' mastah's chickens.



PROTEST



WHO say my haht ain't true to
you ?

Dey bettah heish dey mouf.
I knows I loves you thoo an' thoo
In watah time er drouf.
I wush dese people 'd stop dey
talkin',
Don't mean no mo' dan chicken's
squawkin':
I guess I knows which way I's
walkin',
I knows de norf fom souf.

I does not love Elizy Brown,
I guess I knows my min'.
You allus try to tek me down
Wid evaht'ng you fin'.



Ef dese hyeah folks will keep on
fillin'
Yo' haid wid nonsense, an' you's
willin'
I bet some day dey 'll be a killin'
Somewhaih along de line.

O' cose I buys de gal ice-cream,
 Whut else I gwine to do?
I knows jes' how de t'ing 'ud seem
 Ef I'd be sho't wid you.
On Sunday, you's at chu'ch a-
 shoutin',
Den all de week you go 'roun'
 poutin'—
I's mighty tiahed o' all dis doubtin',
 I tell you cause I's true.



POSSUM



EF dey's anyt'ing dat riles me
An' jes' gits me out o' hitch,
Twell I want to tek my coat off,
So's to r'ar an' t'ar an' pitch,
Hit's to see some ign'ant white man
'Mittin' dat owdacious sin—
W'en he want to cook a possum
Tekin' off de possum's skin.

W'y, dey ain't no use in talkin',
 Hit jes' hu'ts me to de haht
Fu' to see dem foolish people
 Th'owin' 'way de fines' paht.
W'y, dat skin is jes' ez tendah
 An' ez juicy ez kin be;
I knows all erbout de critter—
 Hide an' haih — don't talk to me!

Possum skin is jes' lak shoat skin :
 Jes' you swinge an' scrope it down,
Tek a good sha'p knife an' sco' it.
 Den you bake it good an' brown.
Huh-uh ! honey, you 's so happy
 Dat yo' thoughts is 'mos' a sin
When you 's settin' dah a-chawin'
 On dat possum's cracklin' skin.

White folks t'nk dey know 'bout
eatin'.

An' I reckon dat dey do
Sometimes git a little idee
 Of a miedlin' dish er two :
But dey ain't a ting dey knows of
 Dat I rekon cain't be beat
W'en we set down at de table
 To a unskun possum's meat !



**FOOLIN' WID DE
SEASONS**



SEEKS ink folks is mighty curus
In de way dey t'inks an' ae's.
Dey jes' spen's dey days u-mixin'
 Up de t'ings in almanacs,
Now, I min' my nex' do' neighbour.
 He 's a mighty likely man,
But he nevah t'inks o' nuffin'
 'Ceptin' jes' to plot an' plan.

All de wintah he was plannin'
 How he 'd gethah sassafras
Jes' ez soon ez evah Springtime
 Put some greenness in de grass,
An' he lowed a little soonah
 He could stan' a coolah breeze
So 's to mek a little money
 F'om de sugah-watah trees.



In de summah, he 'd be waihin'
Out de linin' of his soul,
Try'n' to cu'ci'late an' fashion
How he 'd git his wintah coal ;
An' I b'lieve he got his jedgement
Jes' so tuckahed out an' thinned
Dat he t'ought a robin's whistle
Was de whistle of de wind.

Why won't folks gin up dey plannin',
... jes' be content to know
Dat dey's gittin' all dat's fu' dem
In de days dat come an' go?
Why won't folks quit movin' forrad?
Ain't hit bettah jes' to stan'
An' be satisfied wid livin'
In de season dat's at han'?

Hit's enough fu' me to listen
W'en de birds is singin' 'roun',
'Dout a-guessin' whut'll happen
W'en de snow is on de groun'.
In de Springtime an' de summah,
I lays sorrer on de she'f;
An' I knows ol' Mistah Wintah
Gwine to hustle fu' hisse'f.

We been put hyeah fu' a pu'pose,
But de questun dat has riz
An' made lots o' people diffah
Is jes' whut dat pu'pose is.
Now, accordin' to my reas'nin',
Hyeah 's de p'int whaih I 's arriv,
Sence de Lawd put life into us,
We was put hyeah fu' to live !



ANGELINA



W'EN de fiddle gits to singin' out
a ol' Vahginny reel,
An' you 'mence to feel a ticklin' in
yo' toe an' in yo' heel ;
Ef you t'ink you got 'uligion an' you
wants to keep it, too,
You jes' bettah tek a hint an' git
yo'se'f clean out o' view.
Case de time is mighty temptin' w'en
de chune is in de swing,
Fu' a darky, saint or sinner man, to
cut de pigeon-wing.
An' you could n't he'p f'om dancin'
ef yo' feet was boun' wif twine,
W'en Angelina Johnson comes
a-swingin' down de line.

Don't you know Miss Angelina ?
She's de da'lin' of de place.
W'y, dey ain't no high-toned lady wif
sich mannahs an' sich grace.
She kin move across de cabin, wif its
planks all rough an' wo' ;
Jes' de same 's ef she was dancin' on
ol' mistus' ball-room flo'.





Fact is, you do' see no cabin — evah-
ting you see look gran';
An' dat one ol' squeaky fiddle soun'
to you jes' lak a ban';
Cotton britches look lak broadclof
an' a linsey dress look fine,
W'en Angelina Johnson comes
a-swingin' down de line.

Some folks say dat dancin's sinful,
an' de blessed Lawd, dey say,
Gwine to purnish us fu' steppin' w'en
we hyeah de music play.
But I tell you I don' b'lieve it, fu'
de Lawd is wise and good,
An' he made de banjo's metal an' he
made de fiddle's wood,
An' he made de music in dem, so I
don' quite t'ink he'll keer
Ef our feet keeps time a little to de
melodies we hyeah.
W'y, dey's somep'n' downright holy
in de way our faces shine,
W'en Angelina Johnson comes
a-swingin' down de line.

Angelina step' so gentle, Angelina
bow' so low,
An' she lif' huh sku't so dainty dat
huh shoetop skacely show :
An' dem teef o' huh'n a-shinin', ez
she tek you by de han' —
Go 'way, people, d' ain't anothah sich
a lady in de lan' !
W'en she's movin' thoo de figgers
er a-dancin' by huhse'f,
Folks jes' stan' stock-still a-sta'in', an'
dey mos' nigh hol's dey bref ;
An' de young mens, dey's a-sayin',
" I's gwine mek dat damsel
mine,"
W'en Angelina Johnson comes
a-swingin' down de line.





A DEATH SONG



LAY me down beneaf de willers in
de grass,

Whah de branch'll go a-singin' as
it pass.

An' w'en I's a-layin' low,
I kin hyeah it as it go
Singin', "Sleep, my honey, tek yo'
res' at las'."

Lay me nigh to whah hit meks a
little pool,

An' de watah stan's so quiet lak an'
cool,

Whah de little birds in spring,
U'st to come an' drink an' sing,
An' de chillen waded on dey way to
school.

Let me settle w'en my shouldahs
draps dey load
Nigh enough to hyeah de noises in
de road ;
Fu' I t'ink de las' long res'
Gwine to soothe my sperrit bes'
Ef I's layin' 'mong de t'ings I's allus
knowed.



A CHRISTMAS
FOLKSONG



DE win' is blowin' wahmah,
An' hit's blowin' f'om de bay ;
Dey's a so't o' mist a-risin'
All erlong de meddah way ;
Dey ain't a hint o' frostin'
On de groun' ner in de sky,
An' dey ain't no use in hopin'
Dat de snow'll 'mence to fly.
It's goin' to be a green Christmas,
An' sad de day fu' me.
I wish dis was de las' one
Dat evah I should see.



Dey's dancin' in de cabin,
Dey's spahkin' by de tree ;
But dancin' times an' spahkin'
Are all done pas' fu' me.
Dey's feastin' in de big house,
Wid all de windahs wide —
Is dat de way fu' people
To meet de Christmas-tide ?
It's goin' to be a green Christmas,
No mattah what you say.
Dey's us dat will remembah
An' grieve de comin' day.

Dey's des a bref o' dampness
A-clingin' to my cheek ;
De aih's been dahk an' heavy
An' threatenin' fu' a week,
But not wid signs o' wintah,
Dough wintah'd seem so deah —
De wintah's out o' season,
An' Christmas eve is hyeah.
It's goin' to be a green Christmas,
An' oh, how sad de day !
Go ax de hongry chu'chya'd,
An' see what hit will say.

Dey's Allen on de hillside,
An' Marfy in de plain;
Fu' Christmas was like springtime,
An' come wid sun an' rain.
Dey's Ca'line, John, an' Susie,
Wid only dis one lef";
An' now de curse is comin'
Wid murder in hits bref.
It'sgoin'tobeagreenChristmas—
Des hyeah my words an' see:
Befo' de summah beckons
Dey's many'll weep wid me.





FAITH

I 'S a-gittin' weary of de way dat
people do,
De folks dat's got dey 'ligion in dey
fiah-place an' flue;
Dey's allus somep'n' comin' so de
spit'll have to tu'n.
An' hit tain't no p'oosition fu' to
mek de hickory bu'n.
Ef de sweet pertater fails us an' de
go'geous yallah yam,
We kin tek a bit o' comfo't fom
ouah sto' o' summah jam.
W'en de snow hit git to flyin', dat's
de Mastah's own desiah,
De Lawd'll run de wintah an' yo'
mammy'll run de fiah.



I ain' skeered because de win' hit
staht to raih an' blow,
I ain't bothahed w'en he come er
rattlin' at de do',
Let him tahi hisse'f an' shout, let
him blow an' bawl,
Dat's de time de branches shek an'
bresh-wood 'mence to fall.
W'en de st'om's er-railin' an' de
shettahs blowin' 'bout,
Dat de time de fiah-place crack hits
welcome out.
Tain' my livin' business fu' to trouble
ner enquiah.
De Lawd'll min' de wintah an' my
mammy'll min' de fiah.



Ash-cake allus gits ez brown w'en
 February's hyeah
Ez it does in bakin' any othah time
 o' yeah.
De bacon smell ez callin'-like, de
 kittle rock an' sing.
De same way in de wintah dat dey
 do it in de spring;
Dey ain't no use in mopin' 'round
 an' lookin' mad an' glum
Erbout de wintah season, fu' hit's
 des plumb boun' to come;
An' ef it comes to runnin' t'ings I's
 willin' to retiah.
De Lawd 'll min' de wintah an' my
 mammy 'll min' de fiah.

HOPE



DE dog go howlin' 'long de road,
De night come shiverin' down ;
My back is tiahed of its load,
I cain't be fu' f'om town.
No mattah ef de way is long,
My haht is swellin' wid a song,
No mattah 'bout de frownin' skies,
I'll soon be home to see my Lize.

My shadder staggah on de way,
It's monst'ous col' to-night ;
But I kin hyeah my honey say,
"W'y, bless me ef de sight
O' you ain't good fu' my so' eyes."
(Dat talk's des lak my lady Lize)
I's so'y ease de way was long
But Lawd you bring me love an'
song.

No mattah ef de way is long,
An' ef I trimbles so',
I knows de fiah's bu'nin' strong,
Behime my Lizy's do'.
An' daih my res' an' joy shell be,
Whaih my ol' wife's a-waitin' me —
Why, what I keer fu' stingin' blas',
I see huh windah light at las'.



A LOVE LETTER



OH, I des received a letter f'om de
sweetes' little gal ;

 Oh, my ; oh, my.

She's my lovely little sweethaht an'
her name is Sal :

 Oh, my ; oh, my.

She writes me dat she loves me an'
she loves me true,

She wonders ef I'll tell huh dat I
loves huh, too ;

An' my h'aht's so full o' music dat
I do' know what to do :

 Oh, my ; oh, my.

I got a man to read it an' he read
it fine ;

Oh, my ; oh, my.

Dey ain' no use denyin' dat her love
is mine ;

Oh, my ; oh, my.

But hyeah 's de t'ing dat 's puttin' me
in such a awful plight,

I t'ink of huh at mornin' an' I dream
of huh at night ;

But how's I gwine to cou't huh w'en
I do' know how to write ?

Oh, my ; oh, my.



My h'aht is bubblin' ovah wid de
t'ings I want to say ;
 Oh, my ; oh, my.
An' dey's lots of folks to copy what
I tell 'em fu' de pay ;
 Oh, my ; oh, my.

But dey's t'ings dat I's a-t'inkin' dat
 is only fu' huh eahs,
An' I couldn't lu'n to write 'em ef
 I took a dozen yeahs;
So to go down dailh an' tell huh is de
only way, it 'peahs;
 Oh, my; oh, my.



**PUTTIN' THE BABY
AWAY**



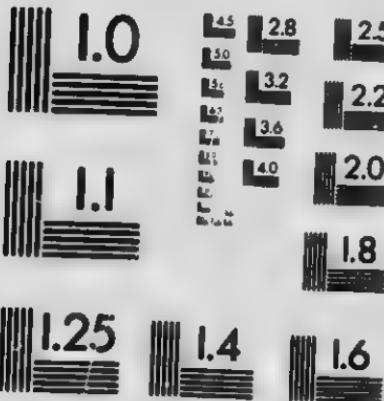
EIGHT of 'em hyeah all tol' an' yet
Dese eyes o' mine is wringin' wet;
My haht's a-achin' ha'd an' so',
De way hit nevah ached befo';

My soul's a-pleadin', "Lawd, give
back
Dis little lonesome baby black,
Dis one, dis las' po' he'pless one,
Whose little race was too soon run."

Po' Little Jim, des fo' yeahs ol'
A-layin' down so still an' col'.
Somehow hit don' seem ha'dly faih,
To have my baby layin' daih
Wi'dout a smile upon his face,
Wi'dout a look erbout de place;
He ust to be so full o' fun,
Hit don' seem right dat all's done,
done.



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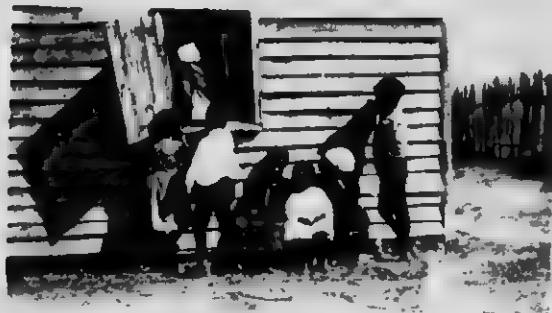
Des eight in all, but I don' caih,
Dey wa'nt a single one to spaih ;
De worl' was big, so was my haht,
An' dis hyeah baby owned hit's
paht :
De house was po', dey clothes was
rough,
But daih was meat an' meal enough ;

An' daih was room fu' little Jim;
Oh! Lawd, what made you call fu'
him?

It do seem monst'ous ha'd to-day,
To lay dis baby boy away;
I'd lu'ned to love his teasin' smile,
He mought o' des been lef' erwhile;
You wouldn't t'ought wid all de
folks
Dat's roun' hyeah mixin' teahs an'
jokes,
De Lawd u'd had de time to see
Dis chile an' tek him 'way f'om me.

But let it go, I reckon Jim
'Ll des go right straight up to Him
Dat took him f'om his mammy's nes'
An' lef' dis achin' in my breas',

An' lookin' in dat fathah's face
An' 'memberin' dis lone sorrerin'
place,
He'll say, "Good Lawd, you ought
to had
Do sumpin' fu' to comfo't dad!"



ADVICE



WEN you full o' worry
 'Bout yo' wo'k an' sich,
W'en you kind o' bothahed
 Case you cain't get rich,
An' yo' neighboh p'ospah
 Past his jest desu'ts,
An' de sneer of comerd's
 Stuhs yo' haht an' hu'ts,
Des don' pet yo' worries,
 Lay 'em on de she'f,
Tek a little trouble
 Brothah, wid yo'se'f.

Ef a frien' comes mou'nin'
 'Bout his awful case,
You know you don' grieve him
 Wid a gloomy face,
But you wrassle wid him,
 Try to tek him in;
Dough hit cracks yo' features,
 Law, you smile lak sin.
Ain't you good ez he is?
 Don' you pine to def;
Tek a little trouble
 Brothah, wid yo'se'f.

Ef de chillun pestahs,
 An' de baby's bad,
Ef yo' wife gits narvous,
 An' you're gettin' mad,
Des you grab yo' boot-strops,

Hol' yo' body down,
Stop a-tinkin' cuss-w'rds,
Chase away de frown,
Knock de haid o' worry,
Twell dey ain' none lef' ;
Tek a little trouble,
Brothah, wid yo'self.





DREAMIN' TOWN

COME away to dreamin' town,

Mandy Lou, Mandy Lou,

Whaih de skies don' nevah frown,

Mandy Lou:

Whaih de streets is paved with gol',

Whaih de days is nevah col',

An' no sheep strays fom de fol',

Mandy Lou.

Ain't you tiahed of every day,

Mandy Lou, Mandy Lou,

Tek my han' an' come away,

Mandy Lou,

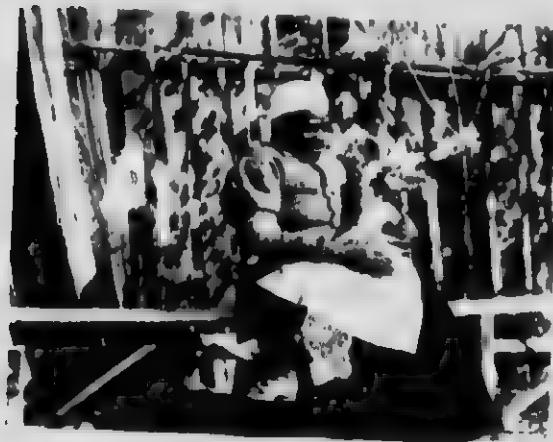
To de place whaih dreams is King,

Whaih my heart hol's everyt'ing,

An' my soul can allus sing,

Mandy Lou.

Come away to dream wid me,
Mandy Lou, Mandy Lou,
Whah our hands an' hahts are free,
Mandy Lou;
Whah de sands is shinin' white,
Whah de rivahs glistens bright,
In dat dreamland of delight,
Mandy Lou.





Come away to dreamin' town,
Mandy Lou, Mandy Lou,
Whaih de fruit is bendin' down
Des fu' you.
Smooth your brow of lovin' brown,
An' my love will be its crown :
Come away to dreamin' town,
Mandy Lou.





SCAMP

AIN'T it nice to have a mammy
W'en you kin' o' tiahed out
Wid a-playin' in de meddah,
An' a-runnin' roun' about
Till hit's made you mighty hongry,
An' yo' nose hit gits to know
What de smell means dat 's a-comin'
Fom de open cabin do'!
She wash yo' face,
An' mek yo' place.
You's hongry as a tramp:
Den hit's eat you suppah right away,
You sta'vin' little scamp.

W'en you's full o' braid an' bacon,
An' dey ain't no mo' to eat,
An' de lasses dat's a-stickin'
On yo' face ta'se kin' o' sweet,

Don' you t'ink hit 's kin' o' pleasin'
Fu' to have som'body neah
Dat 'll wipe yo' han's an' kiss you
Fo' dey lif' you fom' yo' cheah !
To smile so sweet,
An' wash yo' feet,
An' leave 'em co'l an' damp ;
Den hit 's come let me undress you,
now
You lazy little scamp.

Don' yo' eyes git awful heavy,
An' yo' lip git awful slack,
Ain't dey som'p'n' kin' o' weak'nin'
In de backbone of yo' back !



Don' yo' knees feel kin' o' trimbly,
An' yo' haid go bobbin' roun',
W'en you says yo' "Now I lay me,"
An' is sno'in' on de "down" ?
She kiss yo' nose,
She kiss yo' toes,
An' den tu a out de lamp,
Den hit's creep into yo' trun'le baid,
You sleepy little scamp.



OPPORTUNITY



GRANNY'S gone a-visitin',

Seen huh git huh shawl
W'en I was a-hidin' down
 Hime de gyahden wall.
Seen huh put her bonnet on,
 Seen huh tie de strings,
An' I's gone to dreamin' now
 'Bout dem eak:s an' t'ings.

On de she f behime de do' —

 Mussy, what a feas' !
Soon ez she gits out o' sight,
 I kin eat in peace.
I bin watchin' fu' a week
 Des fu' dis hyeah chance.
Mussy, w'en I gits in dailh,
 I'll des sholy dance.

Lemon pie an' gingah-cake,
Let me set an' t'ink —
Vinegah an' sugah, too,
Dat 'll mek a drink ;
Ef dey 's one t'ing dat I loves
Mos' pu'ticlahly,
It is eatin' sweet t'ings an'
A-drinkin' Sangaree.

Lawdy, won' po' granny raih
W'en she see de she'f;
W'en I t'ink erbout huh face,
I 's mos' 'shamed myse'f.

Well, she gone, an' hyeah I is,
Back behime de do'—
Look hyeah! gran' 's done 'spected
me,
Dain't no sweets no mo'.



Evah sweet is hid "rway,
Job des done up brown :
Pusson t'ink dat someun t'ought
 Dey was t'eves erroun' ;
Dat des breaks my haht in two,
 Oh how bad I feel !
Des to t'ink my own gramma
 B'lieved dat I 'u'd steal !



A SUMMER NIGHT



SUMMAH is de lovin' time —

Don' keer what you say.

Night is allus peart an' prime,

Bettah dan de day.

Do de day is sweet an' good,

Birds a-singin' fine,

Pines a-smellin' in de wood, —

But de night is mine.

Rivah whisperin' "howdy do,"

Ez it pass you by —

Moon a-lookin' down at you,

Winkin' on de sly.

Frogs a-croakin' f'om de pon',

Singin' bass dey till,

An' you listen way beyon'

Ol' man whippo'will.



Hush up, honey, tek my han',
Mek yo' footsteps light ;
Somep'n' kin' o' hol's de lan'
On a summah night.

Somep'n' dat you nevah sees
An' you nevah hyeahs,
But you feels it in de breeze,
Somep'n' nigh to teahs.

Somep'n' nigh to teahs ? dat 's so ;
But hit 's nigh to smiles.
An' you feels it ez you go
Down de shinin' miles.
Tek my han', my little dove ;
Hush an' come erway —
Summah is de time fu' love,
Night-time beats de day !



THE OLD CABIN

IN de dead of night I sometimes
 Git to t'inkin' of de pas',
An' de days w'en slavery helt me
 In my mis'ry — ha'd an' fas'.
Dough de time was mighty tryin',
 In dese houahs somehow hit seem
Dat a brightah light come slippin'
 'Thoo de kivahs of my dream.

An' my min' fu'gits de whuppins,
 Draps de feah o' block an' lash,
An' flies straight to somep'n' joyful
 In a secon's light'nin' flash.
Den hit seems I see a vision
 Of a dearah long ago
Of de childern tumblin' roun' me
 By my rough ol' cabin do'.

Talk about yo' go'geous mansions
An' yo' big house great an' gran',
Des bring up de fines' palace
Dat you know in all de lan'.
But dey 's somep'n' dearah to me,
Somep'n' faihah to my eyes
In dat cabin, less you bring me
To yo' mansion in de skies.



I kin see de light a-shinin'
Thoo de chinks atween de logs,
I kin hyeah de way-off bayin'
 Of my mastah's huntin' dogs,
An' de neighin' of de hosses
 Stampin' on de ol' bahn flo',
But above dese soun's de laughin'
 At my deah ol' cabin do'.





We would gethah daih at evenin',
All my frien's 'ud come erroun',
An' hit wan't no time, twell, bless
you,

You could hyeah de banjo's soun'.
You could see de dakhies dancin'
Pigeon-wing an' heel an' toe,—
Joyous times I tell you people
Roun' dat same ol' cabin do'.





But at times my t'oughts gits saddah,
Ez I riccolec' de folks,
An' dey frolickin' an' talkin',
Wid dey laughin' an' dey jokes.

An' hit hu'ts me w'en I membahs
Dat I 'll nevah see no mo'
Dem ah faces gethahed smilin'
Roun' dat po' ol' cabin do'.



